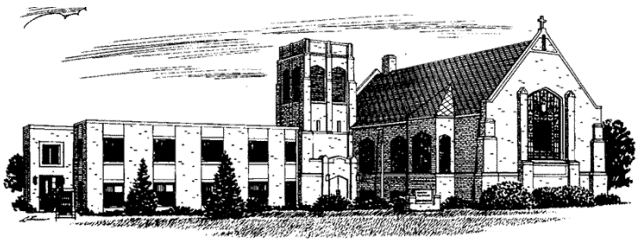


SARON NEWSLETTER

Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA)
510 Main Street
St. Joseph, Michigan 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email: info@saronlutheran.org
Phone: 269-983-1273
Facebook: www.facebook.com/saronlutheranchurchst.joseph

The Rev. Joan Oleson, Pastor
Home: 269-983-2475
Email: oleson@saronlutheran.org

Marcus Roll, Senior Choir Director,
Bell Choir Director
Email: roll1mc@gmail.com
Irma Gorman, Organist
Margaret Froehlich, Administrative Assistant
Nanci Fenrick, Financial Secretary
Child Care

Sundays at Saron:
During the School Year:
8:30 & 11:00 A.M. Worship
Childcare provided
9:40 Learning for Ages 2 – Adult

Summers (thru Labor Day weekend):
9:30 Holy Communion
Childcare provided
No Learning Hour

All are welcome!
We hold in prayer:
The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton,
Presiding Bishop, ELCA
The Rev. Dr. Craig Satterlee, Bishop of the
North/West Lower Michigan Synod, ELCA
The Rev. Whayne Hougland, Bishop of the Episcopal
Diocese of Western MI

Our Companion Synods:
Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras
Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea
Lutheran Church of Latvia

Saron's Mission:
Joyfully sharing God's love for all!!

December 2017

Advent is a time of waiting, of preparation, while we await the coming of the Christ child. As we approach Christmas, we buy presents in preparation to give to our family and friends. But how can we prepare to welcome Jesus who is at the heart of the season? Below are several opportunities here at Saron to help us turn from preparing for Christmas, to preparing for Jesus, as well as our celebrations to welcome him.

Advent Mid-Week
Soup Supper at 6:00 pm
Worship at 7:00 pm ,

Journeying with the Saints to Christmas
December 6 – The story of Saint Nicholas
December 13 – The story of Santa Lucia
Followed by the Hanging of the Greens (church decorating)
December 20 – The story of Las Posadas
Followed by the Singing of Christmas Carols

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM
Sunday, December 17; 11:00 am
(Regular Worship at 8:30 am)

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP
Sunday, December 24; 7:00 & 10:00 pm
Pre-Service Music at 9:40 pm
Candlelight and Holy Communion

CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP
Monday, December 25; 9:30 am
Holy Communion

Pastor Joan

New Members Reception
New members will be received on December 3. If you are interested in joining Saron, please contact Pastor Joan immediately.

Caring and Sharing

In Our Prayers –

We remember in our thoughts and prayers: **Arla Huelsberg** is at the Whitcomb Tower Retirement Center, St. Joseph; **Lila Roethel** is at the Willows; and **Bernice Koski** is at Woodland Terrace: **Virginia Anserello** is at Pine Ridge, Stevensville;

Serving in the military:

Andy Wedde – **California**
Sarah Deal Burrow – Afghanistan

Office Hours at Saron
Margaret (secretary): Mon-Tues, 9 AM - 1 PM
Weds of Newsletter Week, 9 AM - 1 PM
Volunteers: Weds, 9:30 AM - 11 AM+
Nanci (financial secretary): Weds afternoon
Call for other times/changes
When Pastor is out of town, emergency pastoral care information can be obtained by calling the church office (983.1273) or contacting the president of the congregation.
Note: E-mails meant for Pastor should be addressed to oleson@saronlutheran.org. E-mails to Margaret and the church office should be addressed to info@saronlutheran.org.

Happy Birthday Wishes to Saron's Members in December 2017.

Dec. 2 - Victor Coar
Jason Crockett
Dec. 4 - Phil Standen
Dec. 5 - Alexander Breyen
Dec. 6 - Rachael Nadeau
Dec. 7 - Dana Riley
Lorraine Mikesell
Adam Maly
Dec. 11 - Robert Deaton
Dec. 12 - Cynthia Brown
Edward Brunner
Gloria Hopkins
Dec. 13 - Eric Standen
Deborah Standen
Dec. 16 – Charles Pater
Dec. 18 - Heather Pudell
Dec. 27 - Oliver Fortenbacher
Dec. 30 - Gretchen Oleson
Madison Dipert
Dec. 31 - Kristen Harper

Happy Anniversary Wishes to Saron's Members in December 2017.

Dec. 18 – Dennis and Colleen Lundgren
Dec. 26 – Brian and Marybeth Culverhouse
Dec. 30 - Mark and Judy Wedde

"God's Blessings for a very happy day and year round"

If there is anyone who has been omitted, or, if the dates are incorrect from the birthday and anniversary list, please call the church office at 983-1273. Thank you.

SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to the family of Dorothy Bennett upon her death November 4. Her funeral service was held at Saron on November 8. Our prayers go out to Dorothy's daughter and son-in-law Gloria and Bob Hopkins and the rest of Dorothy's family.

Also, we extend our sympathy to the family of Donna Rohweder upon her death on November 12. A service for Donna was held at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Traverse City on November 19. We extend our thoughts and prayers to Donna's family, including daughter and son-in-law Kathie and David Bradley, grandsons Matt, Adam, and their families, and the entire Rohweder family.

God is our refuge and strength. Psalm 46:1a

BEST WISHES -

The Gaspari Family welcomes Christopher Gilmore Gaspari.

Stats:
7lbs. 7oz. 20 inches
11/20/17 at 11:20 am
(37 weeks and 3 days)

Baby and Mama are doing well. Daddy and big sister have been very helpful and loving.

Worship

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

As you prepare for worship, you are invited to read and reflect on the Scriptures for the day.

Sun. Dec. 3 –
First Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 64:1-9
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37

Sun. Dec. 10 –
Second Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

Sun. Dec. 17 –
Third Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

Sun. Dec. 24 -
Christmas Eve
Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-20

Dec. 25 -
Christmas Day, Nativity of Our Lord II
Isaiah 62:6-12
Psalm 97
Titus 3:4-7
Luke 2:1-20

Sun. Dec. 31 -
Ecclesiastes 3:1-13
Psalm 8
Revelation 21
1-Matthew 25:31-46

TIME TO RENEW "LIVING LUTHERAN" MAGAZINE

"*Living Lutheran,"* the magazine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, keeps us informed of events and issues impacting Lutherans. Subscribers also have access online to more than 9,000 archived articles and 400 Study guides.

Those that have been enjoying *"Living Lutheran"* this past year or those who would like to begin receiving *"Living Lutheran"* will be able to purchase or renew for the price of $9.00 a year. Please make out a check to Saron and write "Living Lutheran" in the memo area of your check or place cash in an envelope clearly identified with your name, the amount enclosed and the words *"Living Lutheran."* This can be handed in to the office or placed in the offering plate. We want to get all of the subscriptions in as soon as possible so that there will be no lapse in current subscriptions.

POINSETTIAS PLANTS

You are invited to purchase a poinsettia that will help beautify Saron's chancel at Christmas. You may pick up your plant(s) after the Christmas Eve service December 24th. **ORDER DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 14th.** Call the church office for more details or pick up an order form in the Sunday bulletin.

Nursery Help Needed

We are seeking a paid child care worker, age 18 or above. If you know of someone interested, please contact Mary Kynast or Pastor. Also, we always welcome more volunteers for the nursery. If you can help, please sign up at church or let Marilyn Lucy or Krin Jurgensen know of your willingness.

PRAYER GROUP

Join us on Mondays at 11:00 a.m. for a time of quiet reflection and prayer, which includes lifting up the requests offered on Sundays at worship. We meet in the sanctuary.

Youth

Youth Group Meeting

Are next meeting is schedule for January.

If you're an adult and would like to get involved, contact Scott at scottgaspari@outlook.com.

HOUSTON BOUND

We're heading to Houston next Summer for the National Youth Gathering. Two youth (Meredith Gacek and Jenna Henderson), as well as two adults (Laurel Gacek and Pastor Joan) are registered. Watch for more news about this exciting event.

Learning

book *of* faith

Open Scripture. Join the Conversation.

Saron is a congregation seeking to become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered and sent by the Word.

Thursday Bible Class

We will meet again in January when we will continue our study on the catechism. Watch for details!

Tuesday Evening Men's Bible Study

Saron's Tuesday Evening Men's Bible Study meets at 6:00pm at the church. At 7:00pm we adjourn for a time of fellowship. All men are invited to join us. As the Bible says "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another" (Proverbs 27:17).

We are not meeting during Advent but we encourage everyone to participate in the Wednesday evening suppers and worship. Therefore, our last Tuesday Bible study before Advent was November 28 and we'll resume our studies on Tuesday, January 2, 2018 at which time we'll start our studies of world religions. For more information call Bob Kynast at 269-921-2786.

Ephesus Bible Study Group

Ephesus will meet on Friday evening December 15 at 5:00 pm at the Kynast's home for a holiday celebration and dinner. New attendees are welcome. Please let Kynast's know of your plans at 428-0148.

Men's monthly Bible Devotions and Breakfast

Men's Bible Devotions/Breakfast will again resume on December 2nd at the Galley Grill in Stevensville at 9:00 a.m.

1ST SUNDAY BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

December 3rd, 6:30 in the upstairs lounge, we will be talking about "News of the World," by Paulette Jiles. This beautifully written novel was a finalist for the National Book Award. Amazon's review says it all. "In the aftermath of the Civil War, an aging itinerant news reader agrees to transport a young captive of the Kiowa Indians back to her people in this exquisitely rendered, morally complex novel.....that explores the boundaries of family, responsibility, honor and trust."

We won't meet in January, but will get together again on February 11, 2018 (note: second Sunday). Well worth the wait is, "The Lilac Girls," by Martha Hall Kelly. If you read and liked "The Nightingale" or "Sarah's Key," you will like this book about the power of unsung women to change history. An American socialite, a Polish teenager and an ambitious young, female German doctor find themselves thrown together in most unexpected ways. Much has been written about WWII, soldiers, battles, concentration camps, etc. This is an entirely different perspective and based in part, on true happenings. The story told in Kelly's book will stay with you for awhile.

Mark these dates on your calendar. Come join us. Everyone welcome. Questions? Call Kathy Cowall (269-428-0354) or kcowall@hotmail.com.

"Reading furnishes the mind only with materials of knowledge. It is thinking that makes what we read ours". (John Locke)

For the rest of our reading season, here are the selections:

February 11, 2018 Lilac Girls,
by Martha Hall Kelly

March 4, 2018 The Art of Arranging Flowers,
by Lynn Branard

April 1, 2018 Take This Bread, by Sara Miles

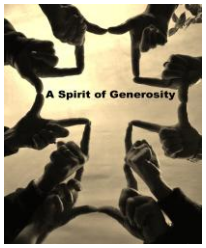
May 6, 2018 Anything is Possible,
by Elizabeth Strout

Please join us and bring a friend. Questions? Call Kathy Cowall (269-428-0354 kcowall@hotmail.com.

"The world was hers for the reading."
(Betty Smith, A Tree Grows in Brooklyn)

Support

STEWARDS OF GOD'S LOVE



….with glad and generous hearts, praising God …. Acts 2:46c

How does Saron steward?

"Steward", a word normally used as a noun, can also be used as a verb as well. How does Saron "steward"? As Dr. Mark Allan Powell states:

"Stewardship is about giving to God."*

So how does Saron give? How do we guide or direct our actions in the name of the Triune God to make a difference in our church, our neighborhoods, community, and beyond? *Here's just a few of the many stewardship activities in which **Saron** has participated this year:*

God's Work. Our Hands Sunday Each September there is one Sunday where Saron directs our members to help out in a local project.

Meet Me at the Freezer – A mission to provide food and a little companionship when delivering a meal or two to friends or acquaintances in need.

Lutheran World Relief (LWR) – Saron Church Women prepare bags for Personal Care Kits and Fabric Kits and Saron's congregation supplies the materials. We then deliver them to St Michael's Lutheran Church in Portage, MI and they are transported to Detroit, then world wide as needed. As individuals, we also support disaster relief by giving to Lutheran Disaster Response for emergency relief world-wide.

Soup Kitchen – The 4th Thursday of the month most of the year, Saron supplies the food and people, from teenagers to adults of all ages, to cook and serve @ 175+ people a midday meal at the Soup Kitchen in Benton Harbor.

Crop Walk – Each year Saron joins the local community in walking, supplying drink stations, and collecting money to be distributed locally and worldwide to fight hunger.

ELCA Good Gifts - Each year Saron collects money to supply a number of projects that are distributed worldwide. It could be mosquito netting, chicks, pigs, goats, water wells, water purification tablets, roosters, fruit trees, money to start up small businesses ….. the list goes on and on because the need is always there.

School Supplies – Each year school supplies are gathered for use in local schools in Benton Harbor, Eau Claire, or elsewhere as need is known.

Habitat for Humanity – Individuals from Saron regularly help out in projects organized by Habitat for Humanity.

Southwest Michigan Human Trafficking Task Force – Members from Saron are part of this task force to educate and bring awareness to the communities of SW Michigan about human trafficking and to further develop a plan for a victim-centered approach using a multidisciplinary team.

Michigan Blood Drive – Saron volunteers regularly help set up the space so Saron and the general public can be blood donors. We also supply appropriate drinks and snacks.

This is just a short list of Saron's generous stewarding mission. Plus it does not include all the organizations and groups that individuals belong to that also give back to help those in need. Thank you Saron for giving to God in so many different ways.

God's Work. Our Hands.

**Giving to God by Mark Allan Powell. © 2006. P xii*

STOCK DONATIONS

Saron partners with Scottrade, a brokerage firm, to accept stock donations. If you would like to donate stock, contact our representative, Bill Fuentas, at (574) 272-1980. The statements we receive from Scottrade do not identify who donated the stock so please notify Eric Standen or Nanci Fenrick when you have donated. This allows us to complete the transaction and to be sure it's added to your giving statement. If you have further questions or concerns contact Eric Standen or Nanci Fenrick

A Special Message for Travelers and Those Who Prefer Electronic Giving

Saron offers the option to give electronically for your convenience. Please contact the church office if you have any questions or to enroll. Thanks.

Hospitality

Sign Up for Refreshments

Please consider signing up for refreshments to be served after worship on Sundays. There is a sign-up sheet on the Narthex bulletin board.

Outreach

Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen

LARGE or SMALL cans of fruit, for use at the Soup Kitchen, are always needed.
God's Blessings to all, Jan Stevens

Sarah Deal Burrow - News

Saron's Sarah Deal Burrow is currently serving in the military in Afghanistan. As a small way of supporting Sarah while she is away from family and friends for a year, we will be sending her "care packages " of some of her favorite/necessary things! In November, 2 boxes were shipped off, including items such as snacks, batteries, cards, and notes from Saron members, etc.

On DEC 4 another box will be sent to Sarah, We would like to include TWIX candy bars, LIGHT WEIGHT Christmas decorations, AA and AAA batteries, or write a personal Christmas card, and Christmas cookies. Money for POSTAGE will also be appreciated.

Thank you to Mark and Judy Wedde for packaging these items and taking them to the post office.

Thank you, Outreach Committee

Blood Drive scheduled

Please mark your 2018 calendar for January 22. Michigan Blood will hold a blood drive at Saron on that Monday from 2:00 – 6:00 p.m. Please make time in your day to stop by to give blood, and/or encourage a friend to do so. It's a great way to begin the year by helping others.
Thank you, Keith Stevens and Marilyn Lucy

ELCA GOOD GIFTS -

It is time to start thinking about Christmas! When you are thinking of the perfect gift for a family member or friend, consider purchasing an ELCA GOOD GIFT ornament. You will have the opportunity to support the ELCA GOOD GIFTS campaign by selecting an ornament from the Christmas tree in Saron's narthex. There will be a variety of ornaments to chose from, prices ranging from $10.00-$500.00. The back of each ornament may be personalized. Checks may be made out to Saron, with ELCA GOOD GIFTS on the MEMO line.

God's Work. Our Hands,
Thank you, Outreach

LWR Fair Trade

We support Lutheran World Relief Fair Trade farmers through our selling of coffee, tea, and cocoa at cost. We have flavored coffee, decaf, medium and dark roast coffees, black and green teas, and now we are offering Keurig cups.
Please support this ministry by purchasing these products regularly for yourself and as gifts. Thank you.

Women of the ELCA

Deborah Circle

Deborah Circle will not meet in December. January 10th 2018, is the date for the Christmas Party at the home of Linda Pater.

SARON CHURCH WOMEN BAKE SALE

Saron Church Women will be having a bake sale in the church narthex on Sunday, December 10th. Proceeds will go to ELCA Good Gifts, the Berrien County Department of Health and Human Services Operation Good Cheer project (so six foster children can each receive three Christmas gifts), and the Saron Mentor Family Fund. Please bring a baked item or items and, hopefully, make a purchase. This would be a good time to make Christmas treats. We will continue to collect on the following Sunday, December 17. Thank you in advance for your support. It is very much appreciated. Contributions to the Mentor Family Fund are accepted throughout the year.

MEET ME AT THE FREEZER

What is this ministry? Who is it for? Who can take these meals? Where are the meals? These are frequently asked questions regarding this Outreach ministry.

Martin Luther stated that it was the church's responsibility to CARE FOR PEOPLE, and that is what MMATF is all about! Simply said, ANYONE can take a meal and give it to ANYONE who needs it! The meals are located in the dining room freezer, help yourself .

If you are interested in helping in this program. Please contact Jan Stevens

Facilities

USED INK CARTRIGES NEEDED

Please save your used ink cartridges as it saves the church money in office supplies. There is a collection box in the Narthex.

New Dishwasher Installed at Saron

A new Hobart Dishwasher has been installed in the kitchen at Saron. PLEASE NOTE. There is no need to add any chemicals when doing a load. DO NOT ADD ANY SOAP, DETERGENT, SANITIZERS OR RINSE AIDE when operating the dishwasher. The new machine is programmed to dispense detergent, sanitizer and drying aids at the proper time during the wash cycle from supply bottles located in a cabinet to the left of the washer. Therefore, there is no need to add any chemicals to the load. It's all done automatically.

Council News

LOOKING AHEAD

Saron's annual meeting will be held Sunday, January 28th, 2018 after the 2nd service. Mark your calendars.

Saron Lutheran Church Endowment Committee

The mission of the Endowment Committee is to support missions to aid persons both locally and internationally and provide improvements to Saron's facilities. The Committee balances the giving to each of these three goals annually to insure funds are available for growth of each. Since its inception, the Endowment Committee has awarded over $50,000 for the three areas it focuses on for improvement to missions and facilities. The Committee is always seeking the needs of any mission that may be assisted by its funding and encourages members to inform Committee members of needs of any program that may further their mission. For further information contact Dave Bailey, chair of the Endowment Committee.

Financial Secretary News

We welcome Nanci who plans to work in the office on Wednesday afternoons, beginning at approximately 2:30. You can reach Nanci at the office during that time. She is also open to phone calls at 269/845-2595 or an e-mail at **nanci0126@yahoo.com**

Attendance Record	
10/29/2017	*80*
11/05/2017	*101*
11/12/2717	*107*
11/19/2017	*75*
11/26/2017	*107*

Saron's Council Members – 2017

Karen Hinckley (326-0688) – President
Matt Bradley (419-306-5780) – Vice President
Eric Standen (556-9629) – Treasurer
Mary Kynast (428-0148) – Secretary

Mary Kynast (428-0148) – Worship*
Eric Standen (556-9629) – Facilities*
Brad Frey (921-8618) – Facilities*
Scott Gaspari (847-373-8825) – Youth*
Nolan Becker (269-558-3252) – Youth*
Matt Bradley (419-306-5780) – Support*
Tyler Cook (269-930-2810) – Hospitality*
Judi Huff (473-5075) – Hospitality*
Amy Nelson (920-227-5354) – Outreach*
Joan Oleson (983-1273) office;
983-2475 home) – Pastor
**liaison*

SARON LUTHERAN CHURCH
510 MAIN STREET
ST. JOSEPH, MI 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email:info@saronlutheran.org

A Congregation of:
The North/West Lower Michigan Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

December 2017

We're on Facebook! Like us at
www.facebook.com/saronlutheranchurchst.joseph

Saron
December Volunteer Schedule

	December 3 ***Second Sunday ofAdvent***		***December 10*** ***Third Sunday of Advent***		***December 17*** ***Fourth Sunday of Advent***		***December 24*** ***Nativity of Our Lord***		***December 31*** ***First Christmas***	
	8:30	**11:00**	**8:30**	**11:00**	**8:30**	**11:00**	**8:30**	**11:00**	**8:30**	**11:00**
	Eric Standen	Tyler Cook	Wendy King	Dennis Lundgren	Sue Rood	Colleen Lundgren	Eric Standen	Denise Cook	Pauline Ngonyani	Bob Kynast
Reader/ Comm.Asst	Wendy King	Mary Kynast	Steve Bell	Wendy Subrin	Jan Stevens	Denise Cook	Jim Manore	Judi Huff	Sue Rood	Matt Bradley
Ushers	Walt & Sallt Schmuhl	Matt Bradley & Krin Jurgensen	Dave & Sue Bailey	John Olson & Ken Ark	Eric & Deb Standen	Dave & Sue Bailey	Dave and Kathie Bradley	David & Emma young	Eric & Deb Standen	Peter & Karen Johnson
Acolyte	Mia Bradley	Grant Gacek	Brooke Henderson	Molly Becker	Brandon Burrow	Jenna Henderson				Meredith Gacek
Nursery 1st	Allison Rood	Ruth Stelling	Mary Alice Brunner	Frieda Williams	Deb Standen	Judi Huff	Fran Richards	Mary Kynast	Marilyn Frey	Marilyn Lucy
Nursery 2nd										
Bldg. close		Dan Gustafson		Ken Ark		Jerry and Ruth Stelling		Dennis & Colleen Lundgren		Bob and Mary Kynast
Snacks	Irma Gorman	Marilyn Lucy		Nick & Katie Hooper						
Flowers					Dennis & Colleen Lundgren		Poinsettias		Poinsettias	

December 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	*2* 9:00 a.m. Men's Devotion/Break
3 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Worship 9:40a.m.SCS Classes 6:30 p.m. 1st Sunday Book Discussion Group	**4** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group	***5***	**6** 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers 6:00 p.m. Advent Soup Supper 7:00 p.m. Worship	**7** 9:30 a.m. Bible Class 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Senior Choir Rehearsal	**8**	9
10 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Worship 9:40 a.m. SCS Classes	**11** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group Newsletter Articles due	**12** 4:00 p.m. Vasa Meeting 7:00 p.m. Support Committee	**13** 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers 6:00 p.m. Advent Soup Supper 7:00 p.m. Worship	**14** 9:30 a.m. Bible Class 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Senior Choir Rehearsal	**15**	16
17 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Worship 9:40 a.m. SCS Classes 11:00 a.m. Youth Christmas Program 5:00 p.m. Ephesus Group Dinner	**18** 11:00 a.m. Prayer Group 7:00 p.m.Church Council Meets	**19**	**20** 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers 6:00 p.m. Advent Soup Supper 7:00 p.m. Worship	**21** 9:30 a.m. Bible Class 6:00 p.m. Bells 7:00 p.m. Senior Choir Rehearsal	**22**	23
24 8:30 &11:00 Worship 7:00 p.m. & 10:00 p.m. Worship with Communion	**25** 9:30 a.m. One Service Christmas Day	**26**	**27** 9:30 a.m. Golden Hammers	**28**	**29**	30
31 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. Worship NO SCS Classes						